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DATE

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DAY

PRODUCTION

ANNOUNCER

ENGINEER

REMARKS

ANNOUNCER "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers"

MUSIC QUARTET RANGERS SONG

ANNOUNCER Today Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers bring you a story about an almost forgotten episode in the early history of our country -- a story about one of the earliest attempts to establish a public forest reserve in the United States. It is another episode in the development of the forest conservation movement in America -- the story of the Santa Rosa Forest Reserve down on the Gulf of Mexico in the extreme western part of Florida. In presenting a dramatization of this story the folks of the Pine Cone National Forest will take us back to the days of President John Quincy Adams. Today your good friend Ranger Jim Robbins will be President Adams and Jerry Quick the assistant ranger will take the part of Colonel Joseph M. White who was a friend of Adams. Jim --

JIM (OFF) Yes, Everett.

ANNOUNCER Are you and Jerry all set to go?

JIM I reckon we are. How about it, Jerry?

JERRY (OFF) Any time you say.

ANNOUNCER All right. Here we go. Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers present the story of the Santa Rosa Forest Reserve. During the administration of John Quincy Adams, who was the 6th President of the United States, a navy yard was established at Pensacola, Florida. America had become a nation, self-conscious in its new independence, and determined to make its place beside the other nations of the world. This ambition demanded the building of a navy, a navy to show in our own front yard, the Atlantic Ocean, a navy with speed and strength enough to run down cocky, blustering pirates who badgered our poorly protected merchant ships. In those days live oak, or evergreen oak, as it is sometimes called, was considered one of the choicest woods for the construction of ships. President Adams had established the Pensacola navy yard in a section of the country where live oak was abundant. He realized the value of the timber resources more thoroughly, perhaps, because he had made a hobby of tree culture. One day, in the latter months of 1826, while the President was staying at his home in Quincy, Massachusetts, he was visited by his friend Colonel White. They were looking at some of the experimental plantings made by the President.

ADAMS (FADING IN) You see, Colonel, I have planted them in these wooden tubs here. Then, if they come on, I can set them out.

WHITE How many did you plant in each tub, Mr. President?

ADAMS Five thousand seeds and eight pear seeds.

WHITE If they are successful as the walnuts you'll have some fine seedlings in no time.

ADAMS Yes the walnut came up splendidly.

WHITE Didn't you plant some live oak at the same time?

ADAMS Oh, yes. Some of them came up, but they need the tropical conditions you have in Florida to grow well.

WHITE I suppose they do.

ADAMS A splendid tree, those live oak. No wonder they make fine ships.

WHITE I think it was very wise of you Mr. President, to establish the naval base at Pensacola. There's no place in this country where live oak thrive so.

ADAMS If live oak makes good frigates then we must do all we can to make it accessible to our navy.

WHITE We need ships like 'Old Ironsides' if our navy is to keep its star to the rest of the world.

ADAMS There's a prime example of what live oak ships mean to us. If they last to the thousandth part of every vessel we build, they can never sink and will be a permanent fleet ship.

WHITE No other country has forests of live oak within their reach so we have. It's a great advantage.

ADAMS But England has plantations of oak, thousands only, for they know, I have seen them.

WHITE But they do not have the natural forests or possess.

ADAMS If they manage their plantations well they can do without the forests. The Czar of Russia, too, has seen the wisdom of planting oak trees. He has sent to this country for barrels of our oak stumps, which he will plant in his Crimea.



WHITE: And while the trees they plant are growing, we will be building ships from our own mature forests.

ADAMS: If we have any left to cut.

WHITE: (LAUGHING) Isn't Pensacola surrounded by forests of live oak?

ADAMS: Indeed it is. And every rascal for miles around who owns an axe and a boat has cut those trees to sell to the British or Spanish or anyone else who'll pay for them.

WHITE: They do steal quite a number of trees, but they can't--

ADAMS: And they steal them from public lands. What has happened on the Santa Rosa Peninsula? Most of that is public territory.

WHITE: They steal from private lands also. I have a few acres on Santa Rosa, which are owned jointly between myself and Judge Breckenridge. We have lost hundreds of trees near the water, where they are easy to get at.

ADAMS: And those are the trees most valuable for our use. If such depredations continue our precious forests of live oak will be little more than memories.

WHITE: If we could get aside those lands and protect them.

ADAMS: Aren't you a member of the Senate? Cannot legislation be initiated in the Senate any longer? Sometimes I wonder.

WHITE: I shall draft the bill myself, if you will help me. It should cost but little to organize a protective force to guard the timber.

ADAMS: And experiments should be made in planting.

WHITE: There is a great deal of natural seeding in the live oak.

ADAMS: But will it keep pace with the cutting? We need to know what can be done with planting.

WHITE: It wouldn't cost much to make experiments at Santa Rosa.

ADAMS: And might profit us greatly in years to come.

WHITE: We can draft the bill at once.

ADAMS: It's a pity you are known to be a friend of mine. If you were not, the bill would be more likely to pass.

WHITE: (LAUGHING) You have little faith in your Congress.

ADAMS: The deficiency is mutual -- But they may have sufficient intelligence to see the wisdom of this bill.

WHITE: I am sure they will. (FADING) I shall present it to Congress --

ENDING UP AND UNDER

ANNOUNCER: President Adams was wise to leave the matter of creating a national winter reserve to the hands of Senator White. Adams was never a politician and had gained the disfavor of Congress on several occasions. Senator White carefully drafted the bill and presented it to Congress on January 15, 1927. The bill was referred to a committee and Senator White was later supplied additional information concerning the topography of Santa Rosa. Senator John Branch, who was one of the members of the committee, raised a question concerning the proposal.

BRANCH: (FADING IN) I understand Mr. White that all of the land on Santa Rosa peninsula is not owned by the government.

VOICES: What's that, Branch? What did he say?

WHITE: Correct, Mr. Branch. I was about ---

BRANCH: There seems to be a certain number of acres in the very center of the peninsula which are privately owned.

WHITE: As I say, Mr. Branch, I was about to ---

BRANCH: And if I am not mistaken this land is owned by you, Senator White.

WHITE: (SLIGHT PAUSE) Correct again Senator Branch!

MURMUR OF VOICES

BRANCH: It places the Senator in a somewhat embarrassing position, if I may say so.

WHITE: (LAUGHING) You may say so all you wish, Mr. Branch, and I would still not be embarrassed. Neither by your insinuation, nor by the fact that I am part owner of certain acres on Santa Rosa. In fact, I would go so far as to suggest to this committee that my land be purchased by the government in order to eliminate any private interests from Santa Rosa. I am fully confident that you gentlemen can see the wisdom of keeping (FADING) this forest experiment in one complete unit ---

MUSIC UP AND UNDER

ANNOUNCER: The boldness of Senator White's answer to the Mendocino implications of Branch saved what might have been a pitfall in the Santa Rosa plan. But White was worried by the apparent opposition of his colleague Branch and went to President Hoover to ask his advice on the situation ---

WHITE (FADING IN) It isn't Branch, himself, who'll cause trouble for President. But those he may excite against the bill by his insinuations.

ADAMS You did well to take hold of the situation then and there, which it may save trouble in the future.

WHITE I wouldn't feel uneasy about it if he hadn't been so eager to inform the committee that I own an acreage on Santa Rosa.

ADAMS Do you know where he obtained the information?

WHITE He may have heard me mention the fact sometime. I have made no secret of it whatsoever.

ADAMS That is in your favor.

WHITE But Branch will twist anything to suit his purpose.

ADAMS And you can continue to meet his insinuations with frankness.

WHITE Yes. But his efforts may poison others against Judge Erackenridge. And Erackenridge is the best man we could find to act as our agent on Santa Rosa.

ADAMS Who is Judge Erackenridge?

WHITE. He has a share with me in the land on Santa Rosa. He's lived there for several years to avoid the yellow fever in Pensacola. There's no man, I dare say, who knows more about the trees and vegetation there than he does.

ADAMS He has made a study of them?

WHITE Yes, but he couldn't be appointed to the position if Branch continues his scurrility.

ADAMS: There will be little remuneration attached to such a position. Doubtless the appointment will be left to me without the necessity of confirmation from the Senate.

WHITE: But Branch may have more up his sleeve than he has displayed so far.

ADAMS: He seems to be the only outspoken element opposed to the measure at present. Does he not?

WHITE: Yes. But I haven't talked with any members of the committee since the meeting.

ADAMS: White, this moment has often repeated itself in history. One man selfish ambitious jealous now stands as a threat to the realization of a plan to further the welfare of this nation and he may well succeed.

WHITE: He can't. We must stop him.

ADAMS: I have seen common sense and patriotic intent go down before scheming personal greediness many times. I hardly expect this to be an exception.

WHITE: But it must be. We can't let Branch or any man stop this bill.

ADAMS: Your own integrity will have much weight against Branch. I think it will be best to ignore his insults and openly state your plan as you proposed it to the committee. And as for the results -- we can only wait and see what the vote will bring.

MUSIC UP AND OUT

ANNOUNCER: Fortunately, the fears expressed by President Adams and Senator White were never realized. The bill establishing Santa Rosa peninsula as a timber reserve was passed on March 3rd, 1827. And President Adams appointed as Superintendent of the new project the same Judge Brackenridge of whom Senator White had spoken. But little more than a year later, in 1828 the Adams administration of what was called gentility and breeding gave way to the men of the frontier, the hard-fisted folks of the rifle and homespun, who were led by Andy Jackson. Under the new administration Senator John Branch of North Carolina became Secretary of the Navy which office gave him control over the live oak reserve of Santa Rosa. Branch had been in office no more than a month when Judge Brackenridge received an official pronouncement from him. Promptly the Judge made his way to the home of Senator White --

JUDGE (FADING IN, BREATHLESS) Look what I have received Senator White from our new Secretary of the Navy --

BATTLE OF LETTER

HEAR: Hmmm - (READING) "The Honorable Henry Brackenridge Esquire: You are herewith informed that the Board of Navy Commissioners will shortly make an investigation of government lands including Santa Rosa. You will cease all operations until further orders. Signed John Branch Secretary of the Navy. What is the case of --"

JUDGE (EXPLOSIVELY) Board of Navy Commissioners What do they know about timber reserves?

WHITE: No matter what the Commission reports, Branch will make it appear as he wishes.

JUDGE: But we've scarcely begun work on the planting. It's too early to show favorable results.

WHITE: Branch seems to have ideas of his own about the management of public lands.

JUDGE: If the Santa Rosa reserve is abandoned or Navy itself will suffer more than anything.

WHITE: No one will see that. It's commonly considered that the supply of live oak is as inexhaustible as the forests of the west.

JUDGE: But we need to grow more live oak where it has been removed. It isn't practical to keep going farther and farther inland for timber to build ships.

WHITE: You can't convince this frontier conscience that they should plant trees. They've spent all their lives clearing these trees from their land so they can grow crops.

JUDGE: But the forests should be managed like a crop as well - we must grow more trees to replace those we cut. Can't you see that there is more to this country than their own immediate forest?

WHITE: Not when it's a matter of appropriating money.

JUDGE: But isn't there some way to make them see it?

WHITE: I think not. We can only wait for a more understanding administration, and hope that Branch doesn't completely wipe out what we have started.

MUSIC UP AND UNDER

ADAMS: It was obvious that this report was a criticism of the executive administration, inferring that unnecessary and unauthorized action had been taken then, with resulting benefit to "individuals." Senator White promptly took action in the Senate to bring the matter out into the open. But the lack of support which met his proposals overshadowed the doom of Santa Rosa. -- One Sunday afternoon in February 1931, Grace Wiggins Adams and White were seated in the library of the Senator's home. --

ADAMS: (FADING IN) When did you address our letter to the Chairman of the House Committee Senator White?

WHITE: On the 22nd of January, Mr. Adams.

JUDITH: Did you know that the Branch was destroyed the night about the live oak?

WHITE: I covered the situation completely. I pointed out that the proper reports have been suppressed and that the opponents of Santa Rosa have repeatedly given their opponents of the project by their own statements.

ADAMS: Branch has made infamous use of the fact that the trees were purchased from you two gentlemen.

JUDITH: I have already offered to take back the land at the price paid for it.

WHITE: And Congress refused the offer.

JUDITH: There are 100,000 trees on Santa Rosa now -- only 250,000 were planted and been planted.

ADAMS: At least these few trees are the symbol of what the future may see.

JUDGE: If only there were some way to protect them for the future.

WHITE: How can it be done, when our administration is out of office?

ADAMS: It is true that we are not in office -- But the people are.

WHITE: The people do not see the need for managing our forests.

ADAMS: Perhaps not now, but they will.

JUDGE: And when they do it will be too late.

ADAMS: Sometimes the people assert themselves. They have powers and they know it.

WHITE: But they are seldom aroused to put it to use.

ADAMS: They can be aroused. And once aroused to fight for a cause they believe in, the power they wield in this nation is greater than any on the face of the earth. Soon they will see the need for conserving the resources of nature. It is inevitable. Then they will turn our poor defeat into a glorious victory.

MUSIC UP AND UNDER

AMONGST THE live oak forest of Santa Rosa soon became a minor historical incident. And the "Will of the People" so highly spoken of by our President Adams continued unacknowledged and uninformed. Even those days, the wild day of management of the Nation's timber resources was only a hazy dream to the minds of a few far seeing Americans. But the days continued to grow. Forest conservation work took root and today while we have not yet solved all our forest problems we have the will to do so and hope that this America is going to use the forests of her country as a vital resource to be managed for the permanent use and benefit of our people.

Next Friday another special program is in store when the story of the Pine Cone National Forest will bring you the story of J. Sterling Morton, the man who founded Arbor Day. Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers comes to you every Friday on the Farm and Home Hour through the courtesy of the National Broadcasting Company with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service ---

